

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ACCOUNTING REFORM

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wish to address the body on an issue of some significant importance to the country. First, good business was done by the Senate today dealing with the accounting situation, the financial trust crisis that we have going on in our country with some of the heads of corporations. I think we have taken a positive step on dealing with that problem.

#### NORTH KOREA

Mr. BROWNBACK. I want to address the body quickly and briefly but importantly on what is happening in North Korea and to North Korean refugees coming out of that country.

Prior to the July 4th recess, my colleagues, Senator KENNEDY and Senator ALLEN, and I brought to light the plight of North Korean refugees in a hearing before the Immigration Subcommittee. The hearing capped a month of activity that involved the passage of resolution on North Korean refugees in both the House and the Senate. Both resolutions strongly urged the Chinese government not to repatriate North Korean refugees back to North Korea. The House version passed by 406 to 0 and our resolution passed by unanimous consent on June 19, 2002.

At our hearing, we heard some very moving testimony from Ms. Lee Soon-Ok, a North Korean defector who suffered more than five years in a prison camp. We also heard from Ms. Helie Lee, a Korean American writer whose memoir, *In the Absence of the Sun*, movingly highlighted a largely hidden and painful secret shared by hundreds of thousands of Korean Americans and millions of Koreans—more than 50 years of separation among family members and loved ones since the outbreak of the Korean War. Few other country and its people has suffered as much.

In addition, Mr. President, I urged Secretary Powell in both a formal consultation and by correspondence on the need of our Department of State to allow the processing of North Korean refugees together with the Chinese government and the Beijing office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees.

The plight of North Korean refugees, of course, is merely a symptom of a far more pressing issue—how to deal with one of the most repressive and totalitarian states in the world, the isolated country of North Korea ruled by one man, Kim Jong-il.

Although news regarding the efforts of many in the NGO community and countless others working in North East China have been slowly filtering into the West, the true nature of the North Korean regime is largely hidden and inaccessible.

It was not until the showing of a dramatic video of five members of the Han-mee family being forcibly removed from the Japanese consulate in Beijing that the world began to pay attention. Since then, several other asylum bids have drawn the attention of mainstream media, including the horrifying story of baby-killings in North Korean prison camps reported in the *New York Times* and based on the testimony of Ms. Soon Ok Lee, who, as I indicated before, testified at our hearing.

In June 2002, ABC Nighttime broadcast a three-part documentary of the North Korean refugee in China by Ms. Kim Jung-eun whose schedule did not permit her to testify before our committee. I was told by ABC News staff that thousands of Americans have responded to the broadcast with e-mails in disbelief and in rage against the North Korean regime. I understand that the three programs drew high response from viewers.

It is estimated that between 2 to 3 million people died of starvation and persecution in North Korea from 1995 through 1998 and that up to up to 300,000 North Korean refugees in China are living a precarious and dangerous life, hiding by day, begging by night, in an effort to avoid being captured and repatriated back to North Korea by Chinese and North Korean agents brazenly operating inside China.

Of the 300,000 refugees, only 518 refugees successfully defected to South Korea this year through June 2002, many of them by taking refuge at foreign missions in Beijing and in Shenyang, China.

These actions by the Chinese are simply unacceptable, not only to basic principles and tenets of international human rights, but also by the fact that China is a signatory of the International Refugees Convention. Hundreds of South Korean, Japanese and western NGO's are working inside China to help the refugees, risking their lives and capture by the Chinese police. A German doctor who also testified before our committee worked in North Korea for a year and a half but was evicted by the North Korean regime for disclosing the tragedies of the NK people. People like him and others on the ground in China and Korea have been some of the most vocal and active in their effort to make the whole world aware of the conditions in North Korea and China. Many NGO's have taken care of refugee families full-time with their own money.

I've met with many of these people, all of whom are now effectively shut down from operating in China. And what they tell me over and over is that they simply cannot not ignore what they saw. All of them said to me that they could not look away and ignore the refugees, many of whom were too scared to even beg for help.

These NGO's from South Korea, Japan, the U.S., France, and Germany, first reported the tragedy of the North Koreans to the outside world. These

NGOs who are in the best position to know report that food aid from South Korea, the U.S., and Japan, simply are not reaching the dying people. As I mentioned in a previous statement, I believe it is absolutely necessary to condition stringent monitoring of the delivery of food aid by NGOs in an effort to determine that they are being distributed appropriately. Much of this aid is apparently being diverted to feed the million-plus North Korean army and to reward the elites and the inner circle around Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang. For this reason, many well-respected NGOs, including Doctors Without Borders have withdrawn from North Korea.

More troubling is that these NGO's have confirmed reports of more than a dozen prison camps in North Korea, where the prisoners are starved, forced to work at hard labor, and tortured to death.

Aside from the troubling refugee issue, we cannot forget that North Korea is a threat to regional and global security. North Korea continues its procurement of materials and components for its ballistic missile programs from foreign sources, especially through North Korean firms based in China. In addition, North Korea has become a "secondary supplier" of missile technology and expertise to several countries in the Middle East, South Asia and North Africa. The CIA's 2001 report assesses that North Korea is capable of producing and delivering via missile warheads or other munitions a variety of chemical agents and possibly some biological.

Furthermore, North Korea refuses to carry out its obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, NPT and the 1994 Agreed Framework. Initial IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency, inspections and intelligence reports in the early 1990s triggered concerns regarding a clandestine nuclear weapons program. U.S. and foreign intelligence have concluded that the DPRK government of North Korea probably has sufficient plutonium for 1 to 5 nuclear weapons. Despite its obligations under the NPT and the Agreed Framework, North Korea continues to refuse inspections.

So while it would be reason enough to continue our pressure on North Korea and China for the humanitarian violations alone, there are also the pressing security threats that the current North Korean government poses to U.S. interests which must be dealt with. While refugee and nuclear weapons issues will necessitate very different responses—the thing they share in common is the alarms they raise about ignoring the North Korean problem in all its complexity.

While I am mindful of the diplomatic sensitivities regarding the need to reach out to the North Korean regime, there comes a time when we have to confront the truth and tell the truth. Moreover, reconciliation efforts have yet to yield any results. There was